

DAN BURTON, INDIANA
CHAIRMAN
BENJAMIN A. GILMAN, NEW YORK
J. DENNIS HASTERT, ILLINOIS
CONSTANCE A. MORELLA, MARYLAND
CHRISTOPHER SHAYS, CONNECTICUT
STEVEN SCHIFF, NEW MEXICO
CHRISTOPHER COX, CALIFORNIA
ILEANA ROS-LENTINIEN, FLORIDA
JOHN M. MCCARTHY, NEW YORK
STEPHEN HORN, CALIFORNIA
JOHN L. MICA, FLORIDA
THOMAS M. DAVIS III, VIRGINIA
DAVID M. MCINTOSH, INDIANA
MARK E. SOUDER, INDIANA
JOE SCARBOROUGH, FLORIDA
JOHN SHADEGG, ARIZONA
STEVE CLATOURETTE, OHIO
MARSHALL "MARK" SANFORD, SOUTH CAROLINA
JOHN E. SUNUNU, NEW HAMPSHIRE
PETE SESSIONS, TEXAS
MIKE PAPPAS, NEW JERSEY
VINCE SNOWBARGER, KANSAS
SOS BARR, GEORGIA
ROB PORTMAN, OHIO

ONE HUNDRED FIFTH CONGRESS

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM AND OVERSIGHT

2157 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6143

MAJORITY (202) 225-5074
MINORITY (202) 225-5051
TTY (202) 225-6852

HENRY A. WAXMAN, CALIFORNIA
RANKING MINORITY MEMBER
TOM LANTOS, CALIFORNIA
BOB WISE, WEST VIRGINIA
MAJOR R. OWENS, NEW YORK
EDOLPHUS TOWNS, NEW YORK
PAUL E. KANJORSKI, PENNSYLVANIA
GARY A. CONDIT, CALIFORNIA
CAROLYN B. MALONEY, NEW YORK
THOMAS M. BARRETT, WISCONSIN
ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON,
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
CHAKA FATTAH, PENNSYLVANIA
ELUAH E. CUMMINGS, MARYLAND
DENNIS KUCINICH, OHIO
ROD R. BLAGOJEVICH, ILLINOIS
DANNY K. DAVIS, ILLINOIS
JOHN F. TIERNEY, MASSACHUSETTS
JIM TURNER, TEXAS
THOMAS H. ALLEN, MAINE
HAROLD E. FORD JR., TENNESSEE

BERNARD SANDERS, VERMONT
INDEPENDENT

May 5, 1998

MEMBER'S PERSONAL
ATTENTION

Dear Republican Colleague:

I am writing with regard to the release of the Webster Hubbell prison tapes. I am sure that you have heard a great deal about this in the news.

As you know, in the process of preparing transcripts, my staff edited over 150 hours of conversations down to one hour of relevant material for public release. Although the vast majority of the material was completely accurate, some mistakes and omissions were made. A mistake was made in not including in the 30 pages of transcripts a couple of comments made by Mr. Hubbell about himself and the First Lady. They were relevant, and they should not have been left out. I take responsibility for those mistakes.

I would like to point out a couple of important facts. 1) The transcripts were only meant to serve as guides. Many reporters had the opportunity to listen to the appropriate sections of the tapes in their entirety and record them. Obviously, nothing was ever deleted from the tapes themselves. 2.) Although the accusation has been made that Mr. Hubbell's exculpatory comment affecting the First Lady was edited out of the transcript, it is important to note that a very similar exculpatory statement about her was contained on another section of the transcript -- and it was underlined to highlight it. So as you can see, there was never any intent to deceive anyone. I hope that by releasing the entire tapes of the conversations in question, these concerns have been resolved.

As Chairman, I am responsible for the actions of this Committee. The one thing that is most important to me is my integrity. I am sickened by the thought that anyone would think that I would purposefully release anything less than completely accurate information.

What I find most unfortunate is that this incident has detracted from the important facts about the Hubbell tapes -- that it appears that Mr. Hubbell and his wife were under a great deal of pressure to remain silent. Our investigation has focused on whether Mr. Hubbell's actions were influenced by over \$700,000 he received from friends and supporters of the President, including \$100,000 from the Riady family. It is for this reason that I believed that it was important that relevant sections of the tapes be in the public record.

I want to apologize to you if this matter has caused you any embarrassment. I hope that if you have any concerns, you will give me a call. We shall continue to move forward with this investigation. Serious allegations of illegal activity remain unresolved, and the American people have a right to know all of the facts.

Sincerely,



Dan Burton
Member of Congress